

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-9 were rejected. By entry of this amendment, claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7-9 have been amended. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Consequently, claims 1-2 and 4-9 are pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-3 and 8-9 were rejected as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-2 and 8-9, as amended, overcome these rejections and are in condition for allowance. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Therefore, withdraw of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1-7 were rejected as being anticipated by Gere et al. (US 5,590,617).

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over the Gere reference, as features of the claim are not disclosed, taught, or suggested in the reference. For example, amended claim 1 recites that “the wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated simultaneously.” The Gere reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest that the wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering may be operated simultaneously. During land operation, the specification of the Gere reference explains that centering ram 161 is secured in a stationary position, preventing movement of the rack and pinion steering unit 152 (which controls the direction of thrust produced by the jet pump) and allowing the control arms 154, 156 to steer the front wheels. (US 5,590,617, column 12, lines 8-16). However, in marine mode, the centering ram 161 is not secured, allowing the rack and pinion steering unit 152 to move freely relative to the controls arms 154, 156, which are prevented from moving. (US

5,590,617, column 12, lines 17-41). These conflicting steering regimes, i.e., land and water, do not disclose, teach, or suggest that the wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering may be operated simultaneously. In fact, the Gere reference teaches away from simultaneous operation of the wheels and marine propulsion unit steering. As such, claim 1 is patentable over the Gere reference and is in condition for allowance. Claims 2 and 4-7 are also patentable over the Gere reference at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 1, and are in condition for allowance. Therefore, withdraw of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claim 8 was rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617), in view of Bufler Ernst (DE 3820967 A1).

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over the Gere and Bufler Ernst references, as features of the claim are not disclosed, taught, or suggested in the references. Therefore, claim 8 is patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 1 and is in condition for allowance.

Claim 9 was rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617).

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9 is patentable over the cited reference. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over the Gere reference, as features of the claim are not disclosed, taught, or suggested in the reference. Therefore, claim 9 is patentable over the cited reference at least based on direct dependence on claim 1 and is in condition for allowance.

In summary, independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Further, the remaining pending dependent claims are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence from allowable independent claim 1.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: August 6, 2007

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